

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' defender, Keith Blunt, joined the club's already bulging casualty list on Tuesday night, when suffering a neck injury early in the Floodlight League 'derby' with Slough Town at Loakes Park.

Also wounded was Isthmian pride as Slough carried off three points — their first away win in the competition this season. A goal-a-half by the Rebels' centre-forward, Dave Swain, wrecked Wanderers' 100 per cent home record, and somewhat re-opened the Section championship, although the Blues retain a firm footing at the top.

SERIES

Slough now go 2-1 up in this season's series between the Bucks rivals, with one draw. The Wanderers had lost a bruising F.A. Cup replay at Dolphin Stadium, but returned there soon after to win 2-1 in the Floodlight League.

Their hopes of a "double" went west along with several wildly shot attempts at goal. For Slough 'keeper, Ian Wolstenholme, rarely came into the reckoning despite Wycombe's extra possession.

There can be no getting away from it. Town were worthy winners, and, in contrast to former occasions, this time for their ability.

With both sides at about half strength, they took just the better of things in what, from the point of view of pure, good football, was a 100 per cent improvement on their previous Premier League scrap.

The Isthmians made poor use of all the constructive work done by substitute Tony Horseman after Blunt's retirement. Horseman playing with his cracked rib tightly bandaged, made a fine architect, developing move after move to worry the Slough defence.

CONSTANT ALERT

Even before his appearance, the visitors were kept on constant alert by penetrating crosses sent off the wings deep into their area. But Slough also broke smartly from defence, and ended a lively early spell by taking the lead after 13 minutes.

Micky Bell's free kick bounced awkwardly upfield completely throwing Wycombe's cover off balance, and Swain was well placed to shoot past the diving O'Brien.

Seven set for trip to Sussex

WYCOMBE WANDERERS supply seven players to the Berks and Bucks F.A.'s cause, when they travel to Horsham F.C.'s ground to meet Sussex F.A. in the Southern Counties Amateur Championship quarter finals, on Tuesday, March 9.

The allied counties make two changes, bringing in former Hendon and Wembley striker, Brian Woolley (now with Maidenhead United) in place of Aylesbury's Harper. Woolley joins Maidenhead team-mate Mick Chatterton, in the eleven, which also includes young full-backs Gary Titterton of Wokingham and Steve Bates of Chesham.

Wycombe 'keeper John Maskell, unavailable for the last match against Kent, is back in place of Wokingham's Brian Callington. Pete Stone, Marlow's sturdy centre-half, is reserve.

J. Maskell; G. Titterton (Wokingham), S. Bates (Chesham), E. Powell, J. Delaney, I. MacLean, G. Anthony, L. Pritchard, M. Chatterton (Maidenhead), B. Woolley (Maidenhead), J. Hutchinson. Sub.: R. Pitts (Maidenhead). Res.: P. Stone (Marlow). Unless otherwise stated all players from Wycombe Wanderers.

Wanderers were still probing for an equaliser when Horseman took over from Blunt in the 29th minute, adding immediate pep to their attacks. Yet Wolstenholme dealt mainly with long-range efforts.

Not so Kevin O'Brien, whose timing and handling seemed impeccable. Terry Reardon, working well from midfield on the right, brought a spectacular save from the 'keeper before half-time, while Wycombe replied via Bernie Bremer when he cannoned the ball over Slough's crossbar in the 37th minute.

The second half realised the pattern to which the first 45

minutes had gradually been building. Wycombe emphasised their front-runners, but Slough necessarily soaked up the pressure, contributing a few tricky attacking touches of their own.

LESSONS

Indeed, their forwards, once in motion, taught their counterparts a thing or two on the night about finishing power.

Three particularly narrow escapes helped maintain the visitors' lead. After 52 minutes, Wolstenholme and Hobbs between them managed to thwart a two-pronged raid by Keith Searle and Horseman.

Seventeen minutes later, a promising move grew around Horseman, but was spoilt when Johnny Hutchinson became a little too eager and ran himself into an offside position to delay things.

Soon, former Hitchin star, Ian Reid, crashed the ball to safety after Searle, Geoff Anthony and Horseman — yet again — had combined to threaten Slough's goal.

All the while, the Rebels kept a grip on play, and from another set-piece position, made it 2-0 with 13 minutes to go.

TRIGGER

Again a free kick triggered them, as they worked the ball to Steve Crosbie, unguarded to the right of the net. O'Brien pulled out a magnificent dive to palm the ball across the goalface but Swain was on the spot again to ram it home.

Swain came close to a hat-trick almost on time, but O'Brien reacted swiftly, tipping his shot over the bar for a corner.

M.W.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS: K. O'Brien; C. Gale, I. MacLean, Blunt (sub. Horseman, 29 mins.), V. Faulkner, I. Rundle, G. Anthony, B. Baker, K. Searle, B. Bremer, J. Hutchinson.

SLOUGH TOWN: I. Wolstenholme; I. Reid, M. Bell, J. Hobbs, K. Mead, R. Hill, T. Reardon, S. Crosbie, D. Swain, T. Turl, M. O'Sullivan. Sub. J. Connell (not used).

Referee: Mr. R. L. Weedon (Reading).

Half time: 0-1. Goalscorers: Slough—Swain 2 (13, 77). Official attendance: 1,780.